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**Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on National Parks**

**Legislative Hearing on Multiple Bills
July 21, 2026**

Chairman Daines, Ranking Member King, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on the following twenty four (24) bills: S. 416, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park Establishment Act Amendments Act of 2025; S. 1674, the Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2025; S. 2498, the National Park System Long-Term Lease Investment Act; S. 2801, the Canterbury Shaker Village National Heritage Area Study Authorization Act; S. 2887, the Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act; S. 2933, a bill to redesignate a playground in the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve in West Virginia as the "Hearts of Gold Playground: In Honor of West Virginia Children and Families Impacted by Childhood Cancer"; S. 2969, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide that State law shall apply to the use of motor vehicles on roads within a System unit; S. 3131, the USS Frank E. Evans Act; S. 3194, the Monterey Bay National Heritage Area Study Act; S. 3501, the Calumet National Heritage Area Act; S. 3524, the American Battlefield Protection Program Amendments Act of 2025; S. 3542, the Upper Raritan River Watershed Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2025; S. 3720, the Bay Area Ridge National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Act; S. 3925, the Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park Act; S. 4238, the Endless Mountains National Heritage Area Act; S. 4399, the Geese House Site Conveyance Act; S. 4538, the Washington's Trail—1753 National Historic Trail Feasibility Study Act of 2026; S. 4595, the Mullica River Watershed Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2026; S. 4767, the Renewing the African American Civil Rights Network Act; H.R. 183, the Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter Recreation Pass Act; H.R. 5254, the Gateway Partnership Act; H.R. 5729, the North Rim Restoration Act; H.R. 6365, the Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act; and H.R. 2306, the Adams Memorial-Great American Heroes Act.

S. 416, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park Establishment Act Amendments Act of 2025

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, a gift to the people of the United States from Mary and Laurance Rockefeller, was established by Congress in 1992. The park encompasses the historic Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller mansion and grounds, as well as the Mount Tom Forest in Woodstock, Vermont, and interprets the history of conservation stewardship in America while honoring the contributions of the Marsh, Billings, and Rockefeller families.

S. 416 would expand the park's current boundary to include the adjacent 159-acre King Farm

(currently owned by the Vermont Land Trust), and would establish the Stewardship Institute as a legislatively mandated program of the park.

The Department recognizes the historical significance of the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park and each family's legacy in shaping conservation and agriculture in America, however, we cannot support S. 416. The NPS is currently focusing its resources on addressing other critical needs, including efforts to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog. Under these circumstances, we believe it would be unwise to expand the park's boundaries, which would require additional resources for the park to manage successfully.

S. 1674, the Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2025

S. 1674 would authorize an expansion of the boundary of Mammoth Cave National Park by approximately 551 acres and link the statutory ceiling on appropriations for land acquisition for the park, which was set at \$350,000 in 1942, to the Consumer Price Index.

Mammoth Cave National Park was established in 1926 to preserve its cave system and the scenic valleys of the Green and Nolin rivers in Kentucky. It is the world's longest recorded cave system, with over 426 miles explored and mapped. In 1981, it became a UNESCO World Heritage site for its extensive cave system and unique geology. The park also protects several threatened and endangered species, including various bats. Two caves near the park's southern boundary host 150,000 to 200,000 hibernating endangered gray bats. One cave is a federally designated Critical Habitat for the endangered Indiana bat. In 2019, The Nature Conservancy acquired these caves and the 551 acres of forested land on the surface. More recently, The Nature Conservancy has offered to sell the land to the NPS for a price significantly below market value.

The 551 acres are not located within Mammoth Cave National Park's current legislative boundary and are not contiguous to its current boundary. Therefore, an Act of Congress is needed to allow the NPS to acquire them. The Department does not support this legislation as the NPS is focusing its resources on addressing critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog. Under these circumstances, we believe it would be unwise to expand the park's boundaries, which would require additional resources for the park to manage successfully.

S. 2498, the National Park System Long-Term Lease Investment Act

The Department recognizes the potential for S. 2498 to significantly enhance the NPS' ability to manage leases by granting the NPS the authority to extend lease terms non-competitively but has concerns about the implementation framework in the legislation as drafted. We would like to work with the sponsor and the Committee to ensure the bill is implemented effectively.

S. 2498 would provide the NPS with the authority to extend any lease issued per 36 CFR Part 18 without initiating a new competitive solicitation process, as long as certain conditions are met. This flexibility will help ensure that well-maintained and beneficial leases can continue, supporting the ongoing stewardship of our national parks.

We appreciate that S. 2498 grants the Secretary of the Interior additional authority to extend leases. However, as currently drafted, the bill could allow many existing leases to be extended repeatedly without clear limits on duration. Without such parameters, there is a risk of reducing transparency, limiting opportunities for new and future businesses to lease NPS properties, and potentially constraining the government's ability to ensure long-term public benefit. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss the bill with the sponsor and the Committee and to provide additional recommendations and comments, including technical assistance to strengthen the implementation framework.

S. 2801, the Canterbury Shaker Village National Heritage Area Study Authorization Act

S. 2801 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to evaluate the suitability and feasibility of designating the Canterbury Shaker Village National Historic Landmark as a National Heritage Area. The area was designated as a landmark in 1992, in recognition of its historical significance as one of the most intact Shaker communities, and since 1969 it has been managed by the Canterbury Shaker Village, Inc., nonprofit organization.

The Department recognizes the historical significance of the Canterbury Shaker Village as one of the most intact surviving Shaker communities. However, the Department does not support S. 2801 because it would divert NPS resources from higher priority operational responsibilities.

S. 2887, the Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act

S. 2887 would designate the full historic alignment of Route 66, from Chicago to Santa Monica, as a national historic trail managed by the National Park Service, with land acquisition limited to no more than a quarter mile on either side of the route.

Route 66 has long symbolized American mobility, innovation, and opportunity, drawing visitors from around the world and supporting rural communities along its 2,400-mile path. The NPS currently manages the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, established by Congress in 1999 and reauthorized in 2009 to recognize Route 66's contributions to American history. Because national historic trail status is a logical extension of the existing Route 66 program and would not require additional federal funding or resources, the Department supports S. 2887.

S. 2933, a bill to redesignate a playground in the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve in West Virginia as the "Hearts of Gold Playground: In Honor of West Virginia Children and Families Impacted by Childhood Cancer"

S. 2933 would redesignate the primary playground in the Grandview area of New River Gorge National Park and Preserve in West Virginia as the "Hearts of Gold Playground: In Honor of West Virginia Children and Families Impacted by Childhood Cancer." The legislation would formally assign this honorary name to recognize children and families affected by childhood cancer and would clarify that all existing references in federal records should be updated to reflect the new designation.

Permanent commemoration in a national park is a high honor, affording a degree of recognition that implies national importance. National Park Service management policies note that commemoration should occur only when Congress has specifically authorized it, or when there is compelling justification for the recognition and commemoration is the best way to express the association between the park and the person being recognized. In light of this policy, the Department defers to Congress on the legislation.

S. 2969, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide that State law shall apply to the use of motor vehicles on roads within a System unit

S. 2969 would require State law to govern the use of motor vehicles, including off-highway vehicles as defined by a State, on roads within National Park System units. Currently, NPS regulations (36 CFR 4.2) adopt State law for the use of motor vehicles in System units but allow the NPS to establish federal rules when necessary. In practice, the use of motor vehicles in System units is governed by State law in many locations. In some situations, it is necessary for parks to establish more specific rules governing the use of motor vehicles. In each case where the NPS establishes rules governing motor vehicle use, it is with the intent of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to conserve park resources in a manner that will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations, in accordance with the NPS Organic Act (54 U.S.C. 100101).

The Department supports the intent of S. 2969 concerning the authorization of off-road vehicles on roads within the National Park System. However, as drafted, the extent to which such State laws are intended to be applied is unclear. The Department welcomes the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor and the Subcommittee to ensure that the bill language can be implemented as intended.

S. 3131, the USS Frank E. Evans Act

S. 3131 would require the inclusion of the 74 U.S.S. *Frank E. Evans* crew members, lost on June 3, 1969, on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. The Department holds deep respect for all who served and sacrificed during the Vietnam War, and remains grateful for the heroism of the *Evans* sailors. However, we defer to the Department of War's determination for inclusion on the Memorial Wall.

The Department remains committed to honoring the *Evans* crew members and welcomes working with partners and the Committee to identify an appropriate way to commemorate their service and sacrifice.

S. 3194, the Monterey Bay National Heritage Area Study Act

S. 3194 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land in California as the Monterey Bay National Heritage Area (NHA). The NPS defines an NHA as an assemblage of natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition and that are best managed through partnerships.

The Department recognizes the importance of the area proposed for study. However, we do not support S. 3194, as the NPS is focusing its resources on addressing current critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog.

S. 3501, the Calumet National Heritage Area Act

S. 3501 would amend the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act to designate the Calumet National Heritage Area in the States of Indiana and Illinois as part of the National Heritage Area System. The NPS defines a NHA as an assemblage of natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition and that are best managed through partnerships.

This region along Lake Michigan highlights the nation's history and heritage around the steel industry, labor history, and new approaches to natural resource management in an industrial landscape, and the NPS found this area's feasibility study to meet all criteria for NHA designation in 2018. However, we do not support S. 3501, as the NPS is focusing its resources on addressing current critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog.

S. 3524, the American Battlefield Protection Program Amendments Act of 2025

S. 3524 would amend provisions of title 54, United States Code, to modify elements of the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), including adjustments to cost share requirements, authorization levels, and the program's overall period of authorization. The bill would also direct the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service, to complete new studies related to sites associated with the French and Indian War and the Mexican American War. Finally, S. 3524 would consolidate ABPP Interpretation and Restoration Grants into a single \$2,000,000 per year program.

The Department supports the proposed extension of the authorization for the Battlefield Acquisition Grant Program from 2028 to 2035. Extending this authority would ensure continued progress in partnering with state, local, and private entities to preserve nationally significant battlefields.

The Department does not support increasing the federal cost share from 50 percent to 75 percent. The 50/50 matching requirement has long been a cornerstone of Land and Water Conservation Fund grant programs, reflecting an equitable partnership between federal and nonfederal entities. Increasing the federal share to 75 percent would alter that longstanding balance by reducing the equal investment that has characterized the program's success and could weaken the shared responsibility framework that has guided these grants for decades.

The Department recognizes the significance of the French and Indian War and the Mexican American War in shaping the history of the United States. However, we do not support completing the proposed studies described in section 3. The NPS is currently focusing its resources on addressing other critical needs, including efforts to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog. While we appreciate the meaningful history reflected in the sites associated with these

conflicts, undertaking new studies at this time would divert limited resources from higher priority operational responsibilities.

S. 3542, the Upper Raritan River Watershed Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2025

S. 3542 amends the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the Upper Raritan River Watershed in the State of New Jersey for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The bill stipulates that the study must encompass sections of the North Branch Raritan River, South Branch Raritan River, Black or Lamington River, and their respective tributaries located within the Upper Raritan River watershed.

The National Park Service is currently undertaking a reconnaissance survey of these same river segments within the Upper Raritan River watershed. A reconnaissance survey is an initial evaluation that can be prepared before a full study of any type is authorized by Congress. Reconnaissance surveys provide a preliminary assessment of whether the area is likely to meet the study criteria to be eligible for designation and whether it is a good candidate for an in-depth study as the next step toward considering a designation.

The Department recommends that the Committee defer action on S. 3542 until the reconnaissance survey has been completed and its recommendations shared with Congress.

S. 3720, the Bay Area Ridge National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Act

S. 3720 would amend the National Trails System Act and direct the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Bay Area Ridge National Scenic Trail. The Secretary, in consultation with interested organizations, would be directed to complete and submit the feasibility study to Congress within one year of enactment.

The Bay Area Ridge Trail is a multi-use trail that runs along the hill and mountain ridgelines surrounding the San Francisco Bay Area. When completed, it will extend 550 miles and connect over seventy-five parks and open spaces. The first trail section was dedicated in 1989 and, since that time, over 400 miles have been established.

The Department recognizes the recreational value that the Bay Area Ridge Trail brings to Bay Area residents and visitors. However, we do not support S. 3720 as it requires the NPS to complete a feasibility study; the NPS is focusing its limited resources on addressing current critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog.

If the Subcommittee chooses to proceed with S. 3720, we recommend amending the one-year study requirement to permit a three-year period, commencing from the date that funds are made available—reflecting the standard timeframe for such studies. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the Sponsor and the Subcommittee regarding this proposed amendment.

S. 3925, the Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park Act

S. 3925 would establish the Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park, encompassing sites in Chicago, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina to commemorate Julius Rosenwald. The legislation further mandates that the NPS furnish educational materials on Rosenwald's life and legacy at his boyhood residence in Springfield, Illinois, which is currently part of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, as well as at the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site in Alabama where architects designed the original Rosenwald Schools. The bill creates the Rosenwald Schools National Network as an NPS-administered program intended to serve as a source of research and to facilitate coordination among organizations involved with the legacy of the Rosenwald Schools.

Julius Rosenwald, the son of German Jewish immigrants who helped build Sears into a retail giant, used his wealth to support widespread philanthropy. Partnering with Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute, he worked with nearly 5,000 Black communities across 15 Southern states to construct 5,357 schools, which educated one-third of Black children in the region, including John Lewis, Medgar Evers, and Maya Angelou.

The Department appreciates the remarkable commitment and philanthropy of Julius Rosenwald, as well as the lasting legacy of the Rosenwald school system. However, the Department does not support S. 3925 as it would require the expansion of NPS sites and programs at a time when the agency is focusing its limited resources on addressing current critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog in the national parks.

S. 4238, the Endless Mountains National Heritage Area Act

S. 4238 would amend the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act to designate the Endless Mountains National Heritage Area in the State of Pennsylvania as part of the National Heritage Area System. The NPS defines a NHA as an assemblage of natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition and that are best managed through partnerships.

The Department recognizes that, in the proposed Endless Mountains National Heritage Area of four counties in northeast Pennsylvania, certain aspects of our nation's history and heritage on the landscape may still be seen and experienced by communities today. However, the Department recommends deferring action on S. 4238. A feasibility study of the area is currently under review by the NPS to determine if it meets the requirements as a national heritage area, in accordance with 54 USC § 120103. The NPS received the feasibility study from The Endless Mountains Heritage Region, Inc., in March 2026 and has 1 year to review and certify if it meets the requirements.

S. 4399, the Geese House Site Conveyance Act

S. 4399 directs the Secretary to convey roughly 21,578 acres within the Denali National Park and Preserve area to Doyon, Limited. Doyon is an Alaska Native regional corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The bill identifies the surveyed lands to be transferred to Doyon while excluding certain lots and lakebed areas. It also requires the Secretary to reserve public easements under section 17(b) of ANCSA, which mandates the

retention of access routes across conveyed Native corporation lands for public travel and subsistence use. The legislation prohibits Doyon from transferring the land to non-federal entities, authorizing mineral development, or allowing uses that would undermine the cultural significance of the Geese House site. The bill also directs the Department to adjust the Denali National Park and Preserve boundary to reflect the conveyance. Finally, the legislation exempts the conveyance from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act land-conveyance regulations in 43 C.F.R. part 2650, which normally govern how ANCSA land selections are processed, as well as from any past or existing land withdrawals, and authorizes the Secretary to make minor corrections to the land survey and legal description with Doyon's approval.

The Department supports S. 4399. The Geese House site represents a culturally significant and ancestral place of deep importance to the Athabascan people. Doyon, Limited, has long sought this land transfer to fulfill critical protection and stewardship responsibilities for the site. This bill advances that goal, by providing a clear legal framework for the conveyance and safeguarding its cultural values through prohibitions on incompatible development and protections aligned with ANCSA. It also appropriately aligns the Denali National Park and Preserve boundary with longstanding land selections made by Doyon more than four decades ago.

S. 4538, the Washington's Trail—1753 National Historic Trail Feasibility Study Act of 2026

S. 4538 would amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating Washington's Trail—1753 as national historic trail. This trail covers the 500-mile route from Williamsburg, Virginia, to Fort LeBoeuf (now located in Waterford, Pennsylvania) that George Washington and his party traversed on his diplomatic mission to the French from October 31, 1753, to January 16, 1754, just prior to the start of the French and Indian War.

A 2019 NPS reconnaissance survey determined that Washington's Trail—1753 is unlikely to meet two of three eligibility criteria for the National Trail System as a Historic Trail. As a result, the Survey did not recommend a National Historic Trail Feasibility Study to Congress. Reconnaissance surveys are preliminary evaluations to assess if an area qualifies for designation and warrants further study.

Based on the 2019 reconnaissance survey, and the fact that the NPS is focusing its limited resources on addressing current critical needs, including reducing the deferred maintenance backlog, the Department does not support S. 4538.

S. 4595, the Mullica River Watershed Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2026

S. 4595 would amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the Mullica River watershed in New Jersey for study for potential designation as a wild and scenic river. The bill stipulates that the study must encompass 23 river segments of the Mullica River watershed, totaling over 190 miles.

The Department does not support S. 4595 as the bill requires the NPS to complete a Wild and Scenic Rivers study; currently, the National Park Service must prioritize its limited resources toward addressing critical needs, such as reducing the backlog of deferred maintenance within our national parks.

S. 4767, the Renewing the African American Civil Rights Network Act

S. 4767 would extend the authorization of the African American Civil Rights Network Act for an additional ten years. Originally enacted in 2018, this legislation established the African American Civil Rights Network, which is administered by the NPS. The Network provides official recognition for the people, places, and events involved in the modern struggle for African American civil rights.

Between 2018 and the end of 2024, the NPS conducted continuous reviews of applications for Network eligibility, announcing new additions at intervals of several months. The Network operated on a non-competitive basis, whereby all properties, facilities, and programs meeting established criteria were included. Pursuant to legislative requirements, the authority for the Network concluded in January 2025, seven years after its initial enactment.

The Department recognizes the role the Network played in commemorating and honoring the history of the civil rights movement and the sacrifices made by those who fought for its cause. While the Department is focusing its limited resources on other urgent needs, such as reducing the backlog of deferred maintenance within our national parks, the Department defers to Congress on S.4767.

H.R. 183, the Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter Recreation Pass Act

The Interagency Pass Program, formally known as the America the Beautiful: National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass, is a collaboration among six federal agencies, including the National Park Service (NPS), that provides access to more than 2,000 public land recreation sites nationwide. Each pass, including the Annual Pass, covers entrance and standard amenity fees.

H.R. 183 would amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) to provide for a free annual National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass to federal, state, Tribal, or local law enforcement officers and firefighters. This legislation recognizes the critical role these public safety professionals play in protecting communities and public lands—often serving as first responders in emergencies such as wildfires, search and rescue operations, and law enforcement incidents on federal lands.

The Department supports H.R. 183 and shares Congress’s commitment to honoring the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers and firefighters.

H.R. 5254, the Gateway Partnership Act

The Department supports H.R. 5254.

H.R. 5254 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with the Gateway Arch Park Foundation (Foundation) to host private events in Gateway Arch National Park (Park), including Park buildings. It requires that the agreement include provisions to protect park resources and values, limit activity to those consistent with the Park, ensure compatibility with National Park Service policy, and implement a fee on the Foundation to cover maintenance, administrative, and personnel costs. Furthermore, the bill clarifies that it does not prevent the NPS from hosting events or issuing permits to other entities for special events in the Park.

The NPS values its philanthropic partners for strengthening community ties, expanding storytelling, and supporting conservation and infrastructure projects that sustain national parks. Since 2009, the Foundation has supported the Park through its public-private partnership the CityArchRiver Project, enhancing the Arch experience.

The agreement authority provided by H.R. 5254 sunsets at the end of seven years. If enacted, this would be the first time the NPS has entered into an agreement to allow for the exclusive after-hours use of a NPS visitor center by a philanthropic partner. The time-limited authority allows the NPS to evaluate the operational, financial, and policy implications of exclusive after-hours use of a visitor center, and to report to Congress regarding the authority's impact. This is consistent with our commitment to data-driven decision-making and responsible stewardship of public resources.

H.R. 5729, the North Rim Restoration Act

The Department supports H.R. 5729 and appreciates the sponsor's commitment to ensuring that the NPS can respond swiftly and effectively to the impact of the Dragon Bravo Fire. Wildfire recovery at the Grand Canyon's North Rim requires an unusual level of coordination across damaged infrastructure, utilities, employee housing, and visitor facilities, and the bill reflects an important recognition of the urgency and complexity of this work.

The bill would provide clear congressional direction for the NPS to employ emergency acquisition flexibilities in response to the Dragon Bravo Fire. H.R. 5729, as passed by the House of Representatives, would authorize the NPS to have full access to the elevated procurement thresholds in part 18 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation normally associated with disaster recovery operations, such as increased micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds. This authority will enable the agency to move more efficiently on time-sensitive repair and reconstruction activities. H.R. 5729, as passed by the House of Representatives, also provides temporary authority for a noncompetitive recovery contract with the existing North Rim concessioner.

In addition to these authorities, we would like the Subcommittee to consider adding provisions that would temporarily raise several small dollar procurement thresholds so the National Park Service can issue minor construction and service contracts more efficiently during recovery. This change would streamline urgent repairs. The Department would welcome the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor and the Subcommittee on these additional amendments.

H.R. 6365, the Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act

H.R. 6365 would direct the NPS to issue a right-of-way across a defined portion of Blue Ridge Parkway lands for the purpose of establishing an emergency egress route serving the Wintergreen community. The Department recognizes the public safety concerns this legislation seeks to address, particularly the need for reliable evacuation capacity in the event of wildfire or other emergencies in this heavily populated and geographically constrained area and therefore does not object to this legislation.

The bill conditions the issuance of the right-of-way on the completion of key analyses, including the evaluation of non-Federal alternatives, the review of fire-behavior risks, and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. These requirements are consistent with existing NPS authorities and ensure that the selected route minimizes impacts on Parkway resources, cultural landscapes, and visitor experience. The legislation establishes a mandatory path to approval once these conditions are satisfied, while preserving environmental and cultural review processes and ensuring that resource protection remains integral to decision-making.

H.R. 2306, the Adams Memorial-Great American Heroes Act

H.R. 2306 proposes to extend the authority of the Adams Memorial Commission for the establishment of a commemorative work honoring President John Adams to December 2, 2032. Congress originally authorized the memorial on November 5, 2001 (Public Law 107-62), and authorization has been extended several times over the years, most recently in 2019 when it was extended until December 2, 2025.

The Department supports the recognition of President John Adams and his family's enduring contributions to the founding and governance of the United States. Few American families have contributed so significantly to the formation and preservation of this country, and it is appropriate that their legacy be commemorated through a permanent memorial in the Nation's Capital. The Department supports the extension of the Adams Memorial Commission and the authorization to construct an Adams Memorial and concurs with the site selection process recommended by the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission (NCMAC).

NCMAC plays a key role in providing advice to the Senate and House Committees with jurisdiction over the National Park System on pending legislation regarding commemorative works. In a letter dated July 24, 2025, the NCMAC recommended that no specific site should be selected at this time, and that the broader area should be comprehensively evaluated for potential locations.